

MINUTES
ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
APRIL 8, 2013 – 4:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Len Mediavilla, Rita Schmidt, Mark Oefinger, Bill Robarge, Zell Steever, John Sutherland, Gary Schneider, Bill Jankowski, Genevieve Cerf, Syma Ebbin, Bob Quevreaux
Excused: Michael Murphy, Luke Singh
Staff: Norris

Schmidt called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of meeting of March 11, 2013

MOTION: To approve the minutes of March 11, 2013 as written.

Motion made by Sutherland, seconded by Schmidt. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Energy Action Plan for Groton

The final draft of the Plan was distributed to the members. Rick Norris gave a brief overview of the report and the appendices.

Building assessments were done with an earlier benchmarking project. Included in the appendices were energy efficiency opportunities for Town and school buildings; energy use summaries and recommendations by building; energy project selection tools; a spread sheet of proposed projects for Town buildings and schools; and a fuel usage summary for Town vehicles.

The committee discussed the payback times of energy savings on various projects, and the necessity to replace some equipment not necessarily because of energy savings, but due to failure.

The committee would like to receive the spreadsheets electronically so that they can manipulate them based on various targets, paybacks, etc. The committee discussed comparing the CIP projects with the goals of the report and the sustainability goals identified for each CIP project.

The committee discussed the possibility of doing another study to include other Town buildings. The prices of various projects were discussed. Poquonnock Bridge Fire Department was the only fire department that participated in the study. Jankowski commented on the technical aspects of the Plan; he had a couple of studies like this done at the SUBASE.

Norris said this plan was a report produced by a consultant, with significant input by Town staff, completed with Department of Energy funds. The plan was presented to the Town Council, as well as Town staff, and shared with this committee. The report is from a planning and policy standpoint. Jankowski said he felt there were some pretty good recommendations. He discussed the ECM's and the Navy's energy goals at the SUBASE. The CIP must overlay this report. Another consideration would be the payback vs. the life of the building. Oefinger

recommended this item be left on the agenda for the next couple of meetings. Members should bring the report with them. The members reviewed their approach to the report, how it fits into the framework, missing information (i.e. City), and availability and sources of project funding. Schmidt asked Steever to forward emails regarding grants etc. to Town staff. Ebbin will forward information regarding K-12 grants to Robarge. The committee discussed the benefits of hiring a full time grant writer.

MOTION: The committee will study the Energy Action Plan over the next couple of months with the view to make recommendations to the Town Council.

Motion made by Sutherland; seconded by Cerf. Motion passed unanimously.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Endorsement of Board of Education CIP Energy Efficiency Projects

Robarge said he would use the report in the future and base his decisions on the recommendations.

The committee discussed the expense of using LED lighting. Robarge said the lifetime expectancy of an LED bulb is significantly longer than other bulbs. Also, there would be savings in labor costs to replace the bulbs due to the frequency required. Some committee members asked why the consultant did not recommend LED lights at Fitch. Norris said there are many philosophies on LED lights. Also, the report was done in September, and the technology changes so quickly that annually, there can be enormous changes. Cerf asked if this report is a practical planning tool. Several committee members said it should be used as a guideline in choosing projects. Discussion ensued on the development of partnerships, i.e. Schools Facilities with Public Works. Robarge asked for the support of the committee for these two CIP projects.

MOTION: To endorse the proposal for replacements of Fitch High School auditorium lights with LEDS (lighting projects).

Motion made by Sutherland, seconded by Cerf.

Motion withdrawn.

MOTION: The EECC endorses the proposal for energy efficiency measures for the education projects at Fitch High and Mary Morrison Schools.

Motion made by Sutherland, seconded by Cerf.

Ebbin asked why the rebates which were put into a revolving fund were not used to offset some of the costs of these projects. Oefinger said there was not enough money to fund the entire project, and he hoped to save those funds to be used at the time when the Town hires someone contractually or part time for energy projects. Oefinger explained that the Town Council directed him to set up a segregated fund for energy rebates to be used to fund future energy projects. The account has approximately \$18,000. Norris thought better to save those monies for matching funds; Ebbin thought using in-kind made more sense than using the actual funds.

Motion to amend to use some or all of the energy rebate fund to subsidize the education projects, made by Ebbin, seconded by Cerf.

Motion to amend failed, 1 – 10, one in favor (Ebbin).

Motion passed unanimously.

Some committee members preferred to save the funds in the energy rebate fund account for a special project, or to be used when a full or part time energy grants person is hired by the Town.

Steever asked staff to submit items such as these to the committee well in advance so that he can review them carefully. He is interested in the process, if this is going to be part of this committee's review in the future.

Oefinger suggested that this committee begin looking at the CIP document in August and come up with their recommendations.

MOTION: To endorse the CIP proposal for an upgrade project at Town Hall.

Motion made by Sutherland, seconded by Steever, so voted unanimously.

VI. REPORT OF STAFF

Norris said the Energy Action Plan will be sent to a printer and disseminated. Mike Murphy is expected back from medical leave soon. Norris said he would send the spreadsheets out to everyone.

Oefinger said one of reasons to have Pfizer, EB and UCONN (and SUBASE) participate in this committee is to learn by what others are doing, and take advantage of projects going on at their facilities, and said the committee may want to take a road trip at some point.

Mediavilla said Groton Utilities will offer a temporary escalation of rebate amounts for the business sector.

Steever requested that staff copy and redistribute all the bios received to date from committee members.

Steever also requested that the approved minutes be included in the agenda packets.

Steever said he has been giving presentations at various organizations in southeastern Connecticut regarding climate change.

The committee discussed upcoming Earth Day activities. Ebbin discussed several events, in conjunction with CIMA, taking place at the UCONN Avery Point Campus during the month of April. Oefinger asked her to send any information to him that he can distribute.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:13 p.m. was made by Steever, seconded by Ebbin. Motion passed unanimously.